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I think this no fitting occasion to enter into such a discussion, and in the next, I entirely deprecate the praise or condemnation of an important work upon the merits of minute technicalities. As an original thinker, Mr. Pierson certainly deserves the attentive consideration of every musician; and as an English composer, who aims to elevate his art, he is entitled to the support of his countrymen, who can only be honoured in his success.

G. A. MACFARREN.

THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC ON THE PUBLIC.

It is doubtless not a novel point in musical experience to many of our readers who are in the habit of attending concerts—either metropolitan or provincial—to note the varied effects produced on the minds of the different members of the audience in whose presence music is performed. In an audience assembled to hear an oratorio, an almost simultaneous feeling is of course exhibited—they form generally an exclusive class, those whose taste qualifies them for the enjoyment of sacred music alone; yet here, indeed, the various shades of musical feeling are often to be discovered.

Practically to illustrate our intention, let us refer to a miscellaneous concert. Let an air of the hornpipe or jig kind be performed—that portion of the audience whose general feelings are of a vivacious kind will forthwith mark the time, and evince their appreciation, by a motion of the head or foot, their countenances becoming animated in proportion to the enjoyment produced by the performance: let a pathetic ballad follow—another section of the audience is now concerned, the eyes that were lighted up by the jig being listless and expressionless: let, lastly, a symphony, sonata, or concerto, be the succeeding performance—the second class, who may well be termed the lovers of the sentimental,—young ladies, perhaps, whose eternal question, sung to a very commonplace tune, “Will you love me then as now?” is an index to the amount of intellectual enjoyment they derive from the practice of music,—this section is now as unmoved as the first; and the real musician, and, it must be added, he who has the taste of one, form the class who partake of the pleasure afforded by the scientific no less than by the beautiful. It should, however, be here borne in mind, that, in writing of the third class, we altogether exclude the awkward efforts of a clique of musicians, whose compositions are as destitute of the soul of music in themselves, as they are meaningless and crude in construction. No delight was ever afforded by the mere mathematical exercises into which some of their works resolve themselves: melody is too often sacrificed to a display of scholarship.

It should be recollected that before the discovery of harmony and counterpoint, music in common with poetry was deemed, alike by the learned and the vulgar, a natural gift, and not a science. It was no more believed that the invention of an air eloquent of passion and feeling was a thing capable of being taught, than was the composition of an Iliad, although in many instances in the olden time the talent of the musician and that of the poet were united in the same person. To illustrate this subject still farther, we

quote the following from an able writer in the *British Quarterly Review*:—

“Out of the musical exercises of the church a great change arose; and this change was the evolution of the laws and science of harmonics. This discovery, it can hardly be doubted, arose out of congregational singing. Farther enquiry into the cause of these effects gave rise, beyond question, to the discovery of the modern science of music; to counterpoint; to the investigation of the natural laws and foundations of harmony; the divisions of the musical scale; and the study of ‘thorough bass,’ and of all that is now termed musical science. That this was a great and interesting discovery nobody can doubt; but at the same time, all persons capable of reflection must see that it added to the music that was before practised much of a totally distinct and heterogeneous character, and led persons to the study and composition of musical pieces, who, without this discovery, would never have dreamed of it. Music was henceforth termed, and in part really became, ‘a science.’ It was connected thenceforward with mathematics. It was no longer the exclusive gift of men of poetical genius. Men of another class altogether, often the reverse of poetical, rushed in, and in vast numbers. *Music now, instead of being in the attire of a muse, was dressed in a wig and gown.* She had apartments at the universities, and ‘Budge doctors of the stoic fur’ were her professors and cultivators! ‘The ear and the nervous system were appealed to more than the intellect. Men whose duller brains and grosser sensibilities would never have apprehended the more intellectual refinements and ethereal principles of musical expression, properly so called, were acted upon at once by the new harmonics, and all the accompaniments they brought in their train. Language became in time changed; people no longer talked of having ‘a soul for music,’ but of having ‘an ear for music.’ They, in fact, found more congenial entertainment at the porter’s lodge than at the old mansion, and they stopped and revelled there! Melody fled before the thunder of the organ, the crash of the orchestra, and the roar of the chorus. They frightened her, tender thing (and well they might), nearly out of her wits. She was confused and deafened, and nearly silenced. What wonder? Let any man look at the ‘fugues,’ the ‘motets,’ the ‘symphonies,’ the ‘sanctuses,’ the ‘rondeaux,’ the ‘madrigals,’ the ‘choruses,’ and the ‘requiems,’ composed by the early harmonic doctors, as given by Dr. Burney and others, and then say what chance either poetry or expressive and passionate melody had amidst the din! Even people ‘with an ear’ must have been sometimes astonished in those days; so strange, and really disagreeable, are many of the mediæval harmonies, and chords, and combinations. Some of the fugues are perfect ‘mazes’ for people to lose themselves in, like the ‘Maze’ at Hampton Court. So intricate are they, that no mortal ear can follow them. Of the same absurdly-complicated character are many of the other ‘movements’ of the musicians of that time. In fact, they are a sort of ‘puzzle’ in sound; musical conundrums, rebuses, charades, and enigmas, for the organ, the fiddle, or the virginal! The masculine and hard-hearted Queen Elizabeth was said to be an adept at this species of music; and it is certainly in harmony, at all events, with much of her character.

“Thus were totally new elements, and a totally new set of associates, introduced into the department of music; and from the effects of the temporary victory which sound, no doubt, then achieved over sense, we firmly believe we are suffering to this day. Better taste has unquestionably prevailed at length over the musical monstrosities of the mediæval composers; but that the cultivation of expressive melody, properly so called, has been injured by this avalanche of noise, we have no doubt. Many of the excrescences of the new mathematical harmonists still cling, like ivy, round modern music, to the great detriment of its

growth and health; and when it is considered how far the persons with 'an ear for music' outnumber the persons with 'a soul for music,' we cannot wonder that musical platitudes are still perpetrated."

The justice of the remarks contained in this extract we think it difficult to impugn. When did the disciples of the severe or mathematical school of musicians, awaken the sympathy or appeal to the feelings of an audience? Yet it is quite possible—indeed, a very common occurrence—that scholarlike knowledge is joined to a 'soul for music,' and from this class of musicians alone can we entertain hopes of the elevation of the science.

The refining effects of the study of music on the public mind, are too frequently seen in social life not to be readily admitted; to enlarge or offer arguments in proof of such a proposition would be superfluous, the fact is generally admitted—admitted, indeed, in a practical form, by the establishment of so many amateur societies, at the head of which stand the colossal associations which periodically meet at Exeter Hall.

There is yet another benefit derived from a better acquaintance with music, and that is exhibited by a reference to the improved mode of rendering the church musical service. It has been the aim of the proprietors of the *Musical Times* to increase the means of attaining a clearer insight into this sublime department of the musical art; and it is not too much to say, from the means we have had of judging, that in the last few years a very great and highly-beneficial change has been wrought in this respect. This is indeed a great fact, and, more than any other, a matter for sincere congratulation to all who know the slovenly manner in which such services were wont to be performed.

It has been truly said, that "Music has no expression for vice; it has no relation to bad passions, but to the finest affections of our nature." It can incite no man to the commission of an evil action, but rather prepares the mind for the exercise of virtue, and soothes the troubled spirit. It may therefore be termed a popular science—the influence it has upon the mind of a people being that of unmitigated good.

VERNON.

TAXES ON KNOWLEDGE.

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Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

BIRMINGHAM MUSICAL FESTIVAL.—This Festival, in aid of the funds of the General Hospital, will be held on 7th September, and three following days, under the especial patronage of the Queen, Prince Albert, and other members of the Royal Family. The following distinguished artistes will form the vocal array of talent to be heard on this occasion:—Madame Clara Novello, Madame Viardot Garcia, Miss Dolby, Madame Anna Zerr, Madame Castellan, Madlle. Bertrandi, and Miss M. Williams; Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Lockey, Mr. Williams, Mr. Weiss, Signori Tamberlik, Polonini, and Belletti, and Herr Formes; Mr. Costa is the conductor; and the following performers are engaged as instrumental soloists:—MM. Sainton, Piatti, Bottesini, and Kuhe; Mr. Stimpson will preside at the organ. The morning performances will consist of five oratorios—*Elijah*, and *Christus* (a posthumous work) by Mendelssohn; the *Creation*, *Messiah*, and *Samson*; and a Motett by Dr. Wesley. The evening performances will be of a less varied, but more classical kind than usual. A ball on the 10th will wind up the performances.

HEREFORD MUSICAL FESTIVAL.—The 129th festival of the three choirs of Hereford, Gloucester, and Worcester, for the benefit of the widows and orphans of clergymen, will be held on the 14th of September and three following days. The principal vocalists engaged are Madame Clara Novello, Miss Williams, Mrs. Endersohn, Mr. Lockey, Mr. Hobbs, Mr. Barnby, Mr. H. Phillips, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Herr Formes. Mr. Blagrove is the leader, Mr. Townshend Smith the conductor, Mr. Amott the organist, and Mr. W. Done, the pianist. *The Creation*, *St. Paul*, *The Last Judgment*, and *The Messiah*, are the oratorios selected for performance.

NORWICH FESTIVAL.—This musical festival will be one of unusual interest this year. Mr. Benedict will, as heretofore, direct all the musical arrangements. Engagements have been entered into with the following eminent singers:—Mesdames Viardot, Fiorentini, Misses Louisa Pyne, Dolby, and Alleyne; Messrs. Sims Reeves, Lockey, and Weiss, Signor Gardoni, Signor Belletti, and Herr Formes. The programme promises a great amount of novelty. There will be two new oratorios; one by Dr. Bexfield, and one by Mr. Pierson, who formerly held the chair as professor of music at the University of Edinburgh. The evening concert will comprise selections from *Faust*, *Charles the Second*, *Prophète*, *Minnesinger*, the finale of Mendelssohn's unfinished opera, *Lorely*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with Mrs. Fanny Kemble to read the text. The orchestra and chorus will be on the same scale as usual. More than one hundred executants have been selected from London. The soloists will be Sainton, Blagrove, and Bottesini. The dates of the festival are fixed for the 21st, 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of September.

SOUTHWARK SINGING ASSOCIATION.—The members of the elementary and upper classes of this association had their half-yearly musical festival on the 23rd of August, at Sussex Hall. The chorus numbered upwards of two hundred voices. The performance of Mr. R. E. Harris, pianist, greatly assisted the vocal efforts of the class. During the evening, a testimonial, consisting of a beautiful edition of Scott's Commentary on the Bible, was presented by the members of the elementary class to their teacher, Mr. J. E. Minot. The audience (a numerous and respectable one) appeared gratified with the entertainments.

NORTH DURHAM.—On Wednesday, the 11th ult., an evening service and performance of sacred music was given at Norham church, to commemorate the restoration of the fine old Saxon building to its original proportions, by adding a north transept, new sittings, &c. Eighteen chorists, from Durham cathedral principally, Morpeth, and Dalmahoy, near Edinburgh, assisted on the occasion. The preces, versicles, and collects, were intoned by the